Arrest of Central Excise and Customs Officials

1556. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of officers of Central Excise and Customs have been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) during the last one year;

(b) if so, what are the names and designations of these officers;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in a large number of cases CBI has sought permission of Government to prosecute these officers or register regular cases and private persons connected with them; and

(d) if so, how many cases permission has been granted and the reasons for not granting permission in the remaining cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

VRS in Nationalised Banks in Karnataka

1557. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of bank employees and officers of various nationalised banks in Karnataka who have opted for Voluntary Retirement Scheme so far;

(b) the amount paid towards terminal benefits;

(c) whether Government are aware that VRS has adversely affected the customer service in nationalised banks; and

(d) the steps, if any, taken to recruit staff in some nationalised banks in Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHEPATIL): (a) As per available information in respect of 22 banks out of 26 public sector banks who have introduced Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), 8622 employees and officers from Karnataka have given option under th Scheme.

(b) The total amount paid to the officers/employees relieved under the Scheme in Karnataka is Rs. 1018 Crores.

(c) and (d) The Voluntary Retirement Scheme was designed with the objective of right-sizing the manpower without affecting the functioning of banks adversely. Banks have informed that generally there has been no deterioration in the quality of customer service. However, in the post-VRS scenario certain imbalances/mis-matches have occurred between officers and award staff employees as well as within officers' cadre. To manage these imbalances/ mis-matches, banks have taken various steps to rationalize their staff by way of reassessment of their cadrewise staff requirement at different centers in order to provide the requisite staff by relocation from surplus to deficit pockets and by need-based promotions of competent and qualified officers. Fresh recruitment, if any, shall be made by the banks as per their requirement as assessed in their Human Resource Development Plans.

Extra Financial Aid to States

1558. SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Governments including Punjab have sought extra financial aid from the Central Government urgently;

(b) if so, the reasons cited by the States for asking such aid; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHEPATIL): (a) to (c) Various State Governments including Punjab have sought financial help for tiding over their financial difficulties. A variety of reasons, leading to a temporary mismatch in the States' receipts and anticipated expenditure is responsible for the financial stress. Apart from advance release of the State Governments' entitlements, Ways & Means Advances were also released to meet temporary mismatch between States' receipts and expenditure besides additional Market borrowing were also allowed to be raised wherever necessary.